DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 271 722 CS 008 475

AUTHOR Castilleja, Janet
TITLE The Problem with Literacy.
PUB DATE [86]
NOTE 26p.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Cultural Background; *Cultural Influences; Educational Needs; Educational Practices; Elementary Secondary Education; *Literacy; *Literacy Education; *Minority Groups; *Outcomes of Education; Reading Research

ABSTRACT

Statistics appear to indicate an overwhelming rate of illiteracy around the world, and yet most children (between 70% and 80% in the United States) do learn to read. It is difficult to reconcile the evidence of widespread failure of reading programs with the knowledge that learning to read can actually be quite easy, given the proper circumstances. One of the problems lies in the presumption that the American way of life (white, middle-class, educated) is the best way and that it should be emulated. This is not to deny that literacy is essential to full participation in American life, but perhaps literacy should not be perceived and taught in only one way. One of the two major, conflicting viewpoints on the causes of school failure among minority groups is language variation, but there is little convincing evidence that dialect use alone is sufficient to cause school failure. The other viewpoint posits social factors as the cause of academic failure, the most critical of which is the perception that one must surrender one's cultural identity for success in American schools. Most minority children will not make this choice, but rather opt to identify with their culture. In most cases this means giving up the possibility of material success. If, in this society, illiteracy means forfeiting food and shelter, a safe place to raise children, and at least a minimum of freedom to pursue life as a person sees fit, then illiteracy is not acceptable. But neither is it acceptable to be forced to give up one's culture and language in order to achieve literacy. (HTH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

Janet Castilleja

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED271722

The Problem with Literacy

Introduction

I recently read that between forty and sixty per cent of the people in the world cannot read. In the U.S., about thirty per cent of the population is functionally illiterate. In any elementary classroom, ten per cent or more of the children will not be learning to read at any given time. This reading failure will very likely follow them through their school years. Among minority groups and low income groups the percentages are even higher. Fuchs and Havighurst (1973) report that twelfth grade Black, Indian, Mexican-American, and Puerto Rican students have reading levels between two and three grade levels below white students. Jonathon Kozol (1985) reports that perhaps fourty-four per cent of Black adults cannot read well enough to function effectively in Am erican society.

Yet most children (between seventy and eighty per cent in the U.S.) do learn to read. Paulo Freire (1970) claimed to be able to teach illiterate peasants to read in six weeks. Scribner and Cole (1981) report that Vai tribesmen require between two weeks and two months to learn to read their native language. It is difficult to reconcile the evidence of widespread failure of reading programs with the knowledge that learning to read can actually be quite easy, given the proper circumstances.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Janet Castilleja
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CS 008 475

The question is, what are the proper circumstances? Much of the research into literacy has consisted of efforts to define literacy, the skills which surround literacy, and the circumstances which best promote literacy. As in all language research, particularly when educators get involved, results have been less than clear cut.

The problem, as I see it, lies in being too quick to assume that the American way of life (that of white, middle-class, educated persons) is the best way and that everybody should be like us. Having worked with a number of people from other countries and cultures, I have had many people tell me how annoying this attitude is. Less articulate people simply avoid the situation by staying away from educators and other missionaries as much as possible. Just as it has been rather a shock to many of educators in the last few decades to realize that Western values are by no means shared by all, or even most of the world, it may be that the value which we place on literacy is not the norm in the world. It may also be that the Western style of literacy, with its emphasis on linearity, analysis, and rationality, may not be the norm. It may not even be the best way to think or approach life. It is certainly not the only way.

THis is not to deny that literacy is essential to full participation in American life. But, must literacy be perceived and taught in only one way?

Walter Ong, in his recent book, Orality and Literacy, discusses the differences between oral individuals and societies and literate individuals and societies. Ong's thesis is that literacy causes a major change in the cognitive abilities of both, and that society, technology and literature as we know it today are possible only with literacy and further, that they are better than the societies, technologies and literatures which have been developed by oral peoples. It is my belief that this kind of culturally biased thinking is a basic cause of the problems which minority children experience in the American school system.

Ong's book provides many good examples of this attitude. For example, one of Ong's major points seems to be that "writing is consciousness-raising." The oral person is unself-conscious and relatively unaware of himself as an individual. According to Ong, this individual would rarely if ever agonize over things like the mind-body problem. But is this necessarily true? In his discussion of the differences between oral people and literate people, he uses an example of people from an oral culture being asked to describe themselves. In response, they answer in terms of the community as a whole, or say that they cannot answer at all. Ong implies that because they don't answer the question by saying "I am this type of person," they are incapable of doing so (p. 54.)

I don't know about this culture, but among many of the Indian tribes of Washington state, that kind of question would be the height of vulgarity. Indian people are often taught from childhood not to talk about themselves, brag, or set themselves apart. A question of this sort could not be politely answered in the manner Ong wants. However, it is ok to talk about this sort of thing in the abstract (What is a good person like? How is John different from Joe?), so the fact the questions had been preceded by a discussion of individual differences is entirely beside the point. This example, I think, shows Ong's tendency to interpret data according to his own cultural prejudices. Perhaps this is unavoidable; that doesn't make his interpretation accurate.

What I seem to be missing in much of Ong's argument is a sense of the ways in which community affects people's language use. I remember before Labov started analyzing Black English, and people kept publishing these stupid articles claiming that Black children had no language (this was at the height hysteria about "cultural deprivation". What this really meant was "deprived of white middle-class culture."), that Black children did not know their own names and that kind of nonsense. Labov came along and studied Black English linguistically and found that Black English is in fact a complete, rule-based variant dialect of English with a strong transfer of characteristics from African languages, and also that if Black children would not tell

sociologists their names, it was probably because they didn't want to. As happens every once in a while, Labov was able to see the situation in an entirely different way, and he was able to make some very compelling deductions about the role of social factors in language use and school failure.

The Problem

As educators, we often seem to believe that some truths are self-evident. We seldom seem to wonder whether or not illiteracy may be in some way adaptive. We also seldom ask whether or not people want to be literate. We take for granted that literacy is always a good thing, that all people want to be literate, and particularly that all people must be literate in our way, as taught by us.

This is true internationally, not just in the U.S. People are always trying to think of ways to make the entire world literate. Of course, when we say this, we are actually thinking of literacy in a fairly narrow sense;e.g. the sort of literacy which reasonably well-educated Americans have. We usually do not consider the idea that the language customs of other cultures might dictate different uses of literacy than the ones we use, if it is needed at all.

One of the major research issues in education today consists of attempts to find out why there is so much illiteracy in the United States, in spite of public

education, literacy campaigns, reading programs, and special education classes. When trying to answer this question, researchers try to find out what is wrong with society, schools, teachers, reading programs, and/or individuals.

It seems clear that although much research has been done into school failure, little really helpful information has turned up. We have not found the solution to the problem of illiteracy. I think that one of the reasons for this is that much of the research is either poorly done or irrelevant. Researchers have a very strong (overwhelming?) tendency to achieve results which match their original hypotheses, and their hypotheses are usually based on preconceived notions acquired from their culture. The research done therefore reflects the prejudices of the society in which it is done. Because in the U.S. we tend to believe that education is the answer to the problems that minority groups experience, most of the research into the relative lack of success minority children experience in school focuses on the school or the individual, rather than the society in which both exist. I don't think this approach is working.

It is interesting that although we often seem to think of minority groups as a peculiarly American problem, they're not. Virtually all countries have one or more minority groups that are treated as "pariah groups" (McDermott, 1985). Although the characteristics necessary to assign

people to pariah group status vary from culture to culture, cultures tend to treat these groups in similar ways, and , what is more interesting, these groups tend to develop similar characteristics. In general, people from these groups, no matter what country they live in, are poorly educated, tend to be located in low status neighbohoods, to have marginal employment, have frequent contact with the police, and engage in behavior which is perceived by the dominant group to be wrong, antisocial, immoral, or abnormal.

Some examples of pariah groups in other countries are the Koreans and Burkamins in Japan, the Lapps in Norway, Catholics in Northern Ireland, the outcasts in India, the Oriental Jews in Israel(McDermott, 1985,) West Indians in Great Britain, and Maoris in New Zealand (Ogbu, 1978). I understand this is also the case with Indians in many Latin American countries. These groups with their distinctive accomodation to pariah group status--crime, poverty, lack of education, low self-esteem, etc.-- persist in spite of governmental and societal efforts to ameliorate the situation.

In the U.S., we have a number of racial, ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic pariah groups who, while varying considerably in many characteristics, share most strikingly a lack of literacy of the sort considered the norm by the rest of society, or at least educators.

Interestingly, we also have at least two minority groups which share a tradition of excelling in education--the Jews and Japanese. I can remember that it was at one time thought that Asians in general excelled in the U.S. educational system after immigrating, but that has not proven to be particularly true of immigrants from Southeast Asia and Indonesia. These people have tended to share more of the pariah group characteristics.

Because minority groups in the U.S. tend to be poorly educated, there is a strong tendency to blame lack of achievement and low standard of living on this one factor. The result has been the vast amount of literature which has been written exhorting society to educate minority group people, exhorting teachers to teach minority group children better, exhorting minority group children and adults to get an education, and/or attempting to identify what it is in the schools, the individuals, or the individuals' culture which results in the lack of education. The striking thing about this writing is that very little really convincing information has been generated.

The remainder of this section will explore two major, conflicting viewpoints on the causes of school failure among minority groups: language variation in school failure and social factors in school failure. I hope to show that conventional beliefs about the causes of illiteracy are not

very well supported and that illiteracy is a social problem more than it is a language or learning problem.

Language Variation in School Failure

It is frequently maintained that major and/or minor language variations are the cause of school failure. The use of Spanish is blamed for the failure of Hispanic children, the use of non-standard dialects for the failure of Black children, and the use of native languages and/or non-standard dialects for the failure of Native American children. Yet, there is evidence that children who begin school speaking a language other than that of the teacher need not experience failure if other conditions are good.

Aaron Bar-Adon gives an interesting example in his article "On the Role of Children in the Revival of Hebrew" (Approaches to Language, pp.531-552). At the turn of the century, there was a movement among the Jews returning to what is now Israel to revive Hebrew. Hebrew, the Semitic language spoken by the ancient Hebrews before the Diaspora, had died out as a spoken language as Jews adopted the languages of the countries to which they migrated or developed new languages such as Yiddish (originally a German dialect) and Ladino (Judeo-Spanish) (Bar-Adon p. 537). Hebrew continued to be used as the language of religion and as a learned language used to read ancient texts.

As the movement back into the Palestine area developed, it was felt that a common tongue was needed, and that Hebrew would be the natural choice, even though at that time it was nobody's native language. One method of spreading the language was to teach school in the language, thus forcing children to learn the language in order to learn anything else. Bar-Adon reports that this method worked very well; soon, children were speaking the language better than than their teachers. In fact, because they learned the language as young children and taught it to their younger brothers and sisters, they became the first native speakers of Hebrew in nearly 2000 years. More importantly for this discussion, however, Bar-Adon reports no adverse educational effects upon the children. Apparently, the children grew up speaking two or more languages, well-educated and able to contribute to the developing nation.

It is well-established that most American Blacks speak a distinct dialect of English (Labov, 1972). This has often been blamed for the failure of Black children in the traditional school system.

However, I have not seen convincing evidence that dialect use alone is sufficient to cause school failure. To start with, Black English is not that different from standard English; they are mutually intelligible (usually). More importantly, Blacks hear standard English all their lives on the radio, on T.V., and in their daily lives

(Newmeyer, p. 589). It is very common for people in a language or dialect contact situation to learn to use both as needed. In fact, Black people often do exactly that. The problem appears to be that something in the social context of language use works against the consistent use of standard English, even in situations in which it would seem to be clearly to the individual's advantage to use it.

Sometimes it is maintained that children do not learn to read, or use the proper dialect, because the optimal stage for language learning or learning to read has passed before the child starts to learn. Yet, there is evidence that people regularly learn new dialects, languages, and reading skills at or after adolescence. Migliazza (Yanomama Diglossi, pp. 561-579) reports that Yanomama males regularly learn to speak and understand a variant form of their language used only in specific circumstances at adolescence. Women usually only learn to understand, but not read, the variant form. Scribner and Cole (1981) report that Vai tribesmen usually learn to read their native language as adolescents or adults (usually in only a few weeks). Freire (19701) reported teaching adults to read in six weeks.

Empirically, I have noticed that Hispanic children who enter the U.S. school system in late childhood or adolescence with no knowledge of English usally fare better than Hispanics born in the U.S. They are often very good students. I used to attribute this to the fact that they

had already learned to read and write, and simply needed to transfer these skills to English. Now, I wonder if the explanation might not be in their experience of being successful students in their native country.

Another example of this are the findings of both Labov (1972) and Miller (1976) that minority children's performance in standard English decreases at adolescence. Labov's explanation for this phenomenom among Black children is that at adolescence children frequently strengthen their ties to their peer group; in this setting, the use of Black English is also increased. The point is that the children's language use changes at adolescence, which seems to indicate that it can change.

This evidence suggests to me that it is very easy to make assumptions about the causes of failure (or success) on the basis of our own prejudices and pet theories. I think a lot of language research reflects the biases of the researchers as much as, or more than, it reflects knowledge gained objectively.

A recent article illustrates some of the problems with research into cultural or linguistic bases of language disabilities. The article (Miller, 1976) discusses the concept of competence, particularly whether or not differences in language competence could be demonstrated among people with different levels of language performance. To this end, Pima children bilingual in the Pima language

and English and Pima children monolingual in English (the writer was not really clear about this, but I assume it was English) were compared to children from Maryland (presumably English speakers). The Maryland children were considered to represent normal English language development.

The researchers found that the Maryland children's command of English increased consistently as they got older. However, the Pima chldren of both groups decreased in English performance as they got older. The conclusion this researcher came to was that the Pima children's competence also decreased. Because the Pima children's performance decreased, and based on the assumption that language development cannot continue after adolescence, the researcher hypothesized that their possibilities for further language development were sharply curtailed, and that this lack of development represented a real decrease in competence. The assumption was that competence can in fact differ among various groups, rather than being relatively equal for all, as has been posited by other writers.

Well, one can see some problems with this research. This writer strongly implied that these children's competence for language was decreased, yet many of these children these were bilingual individuals. I know it has been popular for sometime in the U.S. to view bilingualism as a handicapping condition, but no real evidence for this point of view exists. Research up to this point is

inconclusive about the cognitive effects of bilingualism (Grosjean, 1982). Further, evidence exists that both cognitive development and language development can continue into adulthood (Ferguson, 1981, Hamilton and Barton, 1980, Kidd, 1973, Knox, 1977, Whyte, 1981).

It is highly likely that the Pima children spoke a dialect variation of English (many, if not most, Native Americans who still live in tribal surroundings do). Miller seemed to be basing her assessment of the Pima children's English performance on the basis of the norms set by the Maryland children. Using this method, the Maryland children achieved 100% accuracy on most items. (There is something really strange about basing norms on the language of a particular group, and then testing the same group against those norms.) The Pima children did not. Labov did more or less the same thing when he studied the relationship between peer-group status and reading failure, but he did not posit that the Black children's competence was impaired when it transpired that their language did not match that of his control group. Instead, he proposed that the Black children were simply using a different dialect than the control group.

It is possible to explain the results of this experiment in at least one other way. As the Pima children get older, presumably experience school failure (Native Americans have the worst educational statistics of any group

in the U.S. In some places, the high school dropout rate reaches 90%. It is rarely under 50%.(Ogbu,p. 223.)) and identified more strongly with their own culture, their use of English decreased and their use of the Pima language and/or nonstandard English strengthened. Their competence for language did not decrease, although their performance of standard English did. One could also speculate that these children would tend to perform poorly on tests of cognitive development, regardless of how successful they might be in their own cultural environment.

The biggest problem I have with the conclusions reached by Miller is that although it may be reasonable to propose that language competence varies among individuals, it is not reasonable to assume that those differences would be between racial or linguistic groups rather than individuals. If in fact language competence does vary, one would expect to see a range of competence within any given group. It is known that all human cultural groups use language; human beings are distinguished by their easy acquisition and elaborate use of language. I know of no evidence to indicate that the general ability to use language is lower in some groups than in others. It would be very tricky to extrapolate on the basis of data about performance, especially this data, to generalizations regarding competence.

The implications are that it is too easy to say that children fail in school because they speak a different

language or dialect. Language or dialect differences contribute to the mismatch between students and teachers, but they are not the entire problem.

Although these are just a few examples of research into language use and school achievement, I am beginning to accept the idea that language variation is not enough in itself to be the cause of school failure.

Social Factors in School Failure

Recently, writers and researchers have theorized that Blacks have high school failure rates because of lack of intelligence, language deprivation, poor maternal health, poor nutrition, etc. We sometimes also blame the schools and teachers, even though schools and teachers manage to teach most children.

So far, few researchers have really been able to show why Blacks (and other minorities) do poorly in school. One thing that is clear, though, is that educators and researchers believe that Blacks should do better in school, and that if they did, they would improve their socioeconomic situation. Even though it is highly unlikely that a high school diploma for everybody would solve society's problems, we (as educators) keep acting as though it would.

It seems quite likely that the characteristics which pariah groups develop in some way provide a cultural setting for their lives or function as a way of accomodating to the

reality of their status. R.P. McDermott (1985) proposes that the strain which develops between teachers and children because of differences in learned communication behavior escalates into learning disabilities and school failure. He hypothesizes (on the basis of work done by Labov and others) that when minority group children enter school, they are usually faced with a teacher of the dominant culture. There are subtle but immediately apparent differences between the teacher and the children in communication styles and social behavior. These differences affect the teacher's perception of the children, making it difficult to assess the children accurately, no matter how well intentioned the teacher is.

Sometime in the first two weeks of school, the teacher generally divides the children up into ability groups. The standards by which the teacher divides the children up frequently do not match the perceptions of the children regarding their own and others' abilities. Often, children who are very successful in the minority community are thought by the teacher (on the basis of some pretty superficial characteristics, according to McDermott) to be of low ability. Children thought by the teacher to be of high ability are often not so successful in the minority culture.

One piece of evidence for this hypothesis is Labov's finding that Black inner city children who were nonreaders were usually classroom and peer group leaders, frequently to

be found at the center of any activity taking place. Apparently, there is a negative correlation between school success and social success for Black children(Labov, 1972 pp. 241-254).

But why should school success negatively affect social success? McDermott posits that the cognitive dissonance set up by the teacher's evaluation of the children forces them to either accept the teacher's judgement at great cost to their egos, or to reject the teacher's judgement at the cost school success. Children who are placed in low ability groups generally opt for the latter course.

According to McDermott, children often respond to this situation by developing a behavior of learned inattention to school, and specifically reading, which affects the children biologically. Like Pavlov's dogs, the children learn to respond physically. In a relatively short time, true learning disabilities develop.

Labov found a decreasing use of standard English among Black children as they grew older. The use of a nonstandard dialect of course is not in itself an indicator of disability. Other researchers have shown that dialect use does not necessarily interfere with reading acquisition or school success. In addition, many Black people are perfectly capable of using both Black English and standard English as the situation calls for. The increasing use of nonstandard English rather represents a rejection of school

values and standards, and a more thorough identification with the peer group and the minority community.

Labov (1972, pp.285-290) is quite explicit about the social results of nonidentification with the peer group. Labov terms this group the lames to indicate that their isolation from the cultural environment is a result of some characteristic, positive or negative, which prevents them from being included in group activities. The assumption has to be that although the lames achieve a higher degree of educational success, their childhoods are very lonely and also different from the childhoods of most of the children of the area. Labov also idicates that most researchers have greater access to lames than they do to children involved in the culture, since the lames spend more time in school and at home than the more popular children do, thus skewing the results of the studies towards activities and language use which are not really typical of the community.

I am reminded of the writing of Richard Rodriguez (Hunger of Memory, 1981). Rodriguez has written quite eloquently about his childhood, when he had to start school without knowing any English and knowing very little about the culture he was entering. He was faced with a very serious problem, which he solved by essentially giving up both Spanish and his native culture. He was very successful in school, but unfortunately, does not now really have a mother tongue or a culture. He feels estranged from the

Hispanic community, but not completely a part of the Anglo community.

Rodriguez is often cited by people who are opposed to bilingual education because he claims to have gotten a better education without it than he would have had bilingual education been available. Being forced to compete in English is what saved him, he claims. The problem is that the real feeling and sense of his writing is that he suffered a very painful childhood and is quite bitter as an adult (although he does write very well). He is a perfect example of a person who made the choice to give up his culture rather than the possiblity of an education.

John Ogbu, in Minority Education and Caste (1978), suggests a somewhat different explanation for the school failure of people from caste-like minorities or pariah groups. Ogbu claims that for these groups, there is no real relationship between the acquisition of higher education levels and economic success as adults. He maintains that pariah group adults are prevented from competing for desirable jobs by the dominant society. His thesis is that it is not lack of education which results in low socioeconomic status for minority groups; it is the expectation that poverty and lack of status will result regardless of the level of education achieved which robs minority children of the motivation to achive in school. Ogbu cites evidence (p. 233) that Mexican-American adults

not only experience a wage gap when compared to white adults with the same level of education, but that the differential is greater if the Mexican-Americans are high school or college graduates. Ogbu's data dates from 1972. I think recent evidence indicates that having a college education is at least some help to minority individuals, but evidence seems to be somewhat sketchy. According to Ogbu, children of the pariah group realize sooner of later that the struggle to achieve academically is essentially without reward, and so give up.

This corresponds with my own experiences in working with minority students. It is often true that a strong identification with one's own culture is negatively correlated with school success. But here is the real core of the problem. One should not have to give up one's culture in order to receive an education. One of the things that this shows is that the U.S. educational system is in the business of teaching a lot more than literacy. If it is true that students must abandon their cultures in order to succeed, then it is possible to posit that in fact the adoption of the majority cultural values is at least as important as doing well at specific school tasks. It seems very likely to me that what we ask young children to give up is more that anyone should be asked to give up. It is also much more complex and pernicious than simply being asked to

give up illiteracy. They must also abandon their home and family values, and often their language as well.

Most minority children do not make this choice. Rather, they choose to identify with their culture. In the U.S., as in any country which has pariah groups, this essentially means giving up the possibility of material success. Their choice means they will live in poverty in a marginal community subject to erratic and sometimes brutal treatment, usually with substandard food, housing, and medical care.

It is dangerous to presume to know what people want. Nevertheless, I think it is possible to assume that people of all racial, ethnic and religious groups want food and shelter, a safe place to raise children in the reasonable assumption that they will live to adulthood, and at least a minimum of freedom to pursue their lives as they see fit. If, in our society, to be illiterate means to forfeit these things, then illiteracy is not acceptable. Neither is it acceptable to be forced to give up one's culture and language in order to achieve literacy. This is the problem with literacy.

Bibliography

Anderson, Richard C. and Peter Freebody. "Vocabulary Knowledge." In Theoretical Models and Processes of Reading. 3rd ed. Harry Singer and Robert B. Ruddell, eds. n.p.: IRA, 1985, pp. 343-371.

AKinnaso, Niyi F. " The Literate Writes and the Nonliterate Chants: Written Language and Ritual Communication in Sociolinguistic Perspective". In Linguistics and Literacy. Ed William Frawley. New York: Plenum Press, 1982.

Bar-Adon, Aaron. "On the Role of Children in the Revival of Hebrew." In Approaches to Language: Anthropological Issues. William C. McCormack and Stephen A. Wurm, eds. The Hague: Mouton Pub., 1978, pp. 531-552.

Boas, Franz. The Mind of Primitive Man. 2nd ed. New York: MacMillan, 1938.

Charrow, Veda R. "The Written English of Deaf Adolescents". In Writing: the Nature, Development, and Teaching of Written Communication. Vol.1 of Variation in Writing: Functional and Linguistic-Cultural Differences. Ed. Marcia Farr Whiteman. Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc., Inc., 1981, pp.179-187.

Crick, Malcolm. Explorations in Language and Meaning: Towards a Semantic Anthropology. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1976.

Ferguson, Charles. Cognitive Effects of Literacy: Linguistic Awareness in Adult Non-Readers. N.I.E. Research/Technical Reports, 1981. ERIC ED 222 857.

Freire, Paulo. Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Trans. Myra Bergman Ramos. New York: Seabury Press, 1970.

Hamilton, Mary and David Barton. A Word is A Word: Metalinguistic Skills in Adults fo Various Literacy Levels. N.I.E. Research/Technical Reports, 1980. ERIC ED 222 859.

Heath, Shirley Brice. "Toward an Ethnohistory of Writing in American Education." In Writing: The Nature, Development, and Teaching of Written Communication. Vol.1 Variation in Writing: Functional and Linguistic-Cultural Differences. Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc., Pub., 1981, pp.25-45.

Harris, Wendell V. "Toward and Ecological Criticism: Contextual versus Unconditioned Literary Theory."

CE, 48 (1986), pp. 116-131.

Kidd, J.R. How Adults Learn. New York: Association Press, 1973.

Knox, Alan B. Adult Development and Learning. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1977.

Kozol, Jonathon. Illiterate America. Garden City, New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1985.

Labov, William. Language in the Inner City. Philiadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1972.

Migliazza, Ernest C. "Yanomama Diglossia." In Approaches to Language: Athropological Issues. William C. McCormack and Stephen A. Wurm, eds. The Hague: Mouton Pub., 1978, pp. 561-579.

Miller, Mary. "Competence in English-Language Learning by American Indian Monolinguals and Bilinguals." In Language and Man: Anthropological Issues. William McCormack and Stephen A. Wurm, eds. The Hague: Mouton Pub., 1976, pp. 165-176.

McDermott, R.P. "Achieving School Failure: An Anthropological Approach to Illiteracy and Social Stratification." In Theoretical Models and Processes of Reading. 3rd ed. Harry Singer and Robert B. Ruddell, eds. Newark, Del.: IRA, 1985, pp. 558-594.

Newmeyer, Frederick J. "Prescriptive Grammar: A Reappraisal." In Appraoches to Language: Anthropological Issues. William C. McCormack and Stephen A. Wurm, eds. The Hague: Mouton Pub., 1978, pp.581-593.

Ogbu, John. U. Minority Education and Caste: The American System in Cross-cultural Perspective. New York: Academic Press, 1978.

Resnick, Lauren B. and Betty H. Robinson. "Motivational Aspects of the Literacy Problem." In Toward a Literate Society. John B. Carroll and Jeanne S. Chall, eds. n.p.: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1975, pp.257-277.

Rodriguez, Richard. Hunger of Memory. Boston: David R. Godine,Pub., 1981.

Scribner, Sylvia and Michael Cole. "Unpackaging Literacy". In Writing: The Nature, Development, and Teaching of Written Communication. Vol.1 of Variation in Writing: Functional and Linguistic-Cultural Differences. Ed. Marcia Farr Whiteman. Hillsdale,

N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc.,Inc., 1981, pp. 71-87.

Tannen, Deborah. "The Myth of Orality and Literacy". In Linguistics and Literacy. Ed. William Frawley. New York: Plenum Press, 1982.

Venzky, Richard L. "Linguistics and/or Reading or Is Applied Linguistics a Caveat Emptor Tehnology?" In Linguistics and Literacy. Ed.Wiliam Frawley. New York, Plenum Press, 1982.

Weber, Rose-Marie. "Adult Illiteracy in the United States." In Toward a Literate Society. John B. Carroll and Jeanne S. Chall, eds. n.p.: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1975, pp.147-164.

Wells, Gordon and John Nichols, eds. Language and Learning: An Interactional Perspective. Vol.7 of Contemporary Analysis in Education Series. Eds. Philip Taylor and Colin Richards. Philadelphia: The Falmer Press, 1985.

Whyte, Jean. "Language and Reading: A Study of Adult Literacy Students in Northern Ireland." Journal of Reading, 24, (1981) 595-598.